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FIRST  
**REPORT**

OF THE

**Committee of the Philadelphia Medical Society**

**ON QUACK MEDICINES.**

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*Read on the 15th December, 1827, and ordered to be published by  
the Society.*

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[Extracted from the North American Medical and Surgical Journal, No. IX.  
for January, 1828.]

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**PHILADELPHIA:**

JUDAH DOBSON, AGENT, 108 CHESTNUT STREET.

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1828



1911

REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE

IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION

PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

ON THE 14TH MARCH 1911

AND BY THE SENATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

ON THE 14TH MARCH 1911

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## REPORT.

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IN conformity with a resolution of the Medical Society, at its meeting of the 16th December, we place before our readers the Report of the Committee, appointed, on the 16th June last, to make investigations, the purport of which is conveyed in the Circular published in our July number. We do not stop to praise this Report: the mass of interesting and decisive facts which it contains, on a subject so important to humanity and the profession, will be its best recommendation.

EDITORS.

The Committee appointed by the Medical Society of Philadelphia, to inquire into the remedial value of the more prominent specifics now sold in Philadelphia, under the assumed names of Panacea, Catholicon, Minerva Pill, &c., submit the following Report:—

In obedience to the requisition of the Society, they lost no time in despatching circulars to the practitioners of Medicine in this city, and to a large number of physicians in various parts of the United States, from some of whom they have received in return much valuable information. The little attention which circulars in general are calculated to elicit, will serve to explain in part the reason of these replies not having been still more numerous.

The questions growing out of this inquiry refer chiefly to the most widely known of these pretended specifics, viz. Swaim's Panacea; and on this head the committee have pursued their investigation in the following order. 1. The sense in which the physicians, who gave their certificates in favour of the Panacea, intend their evidence to be received; as discovered by their written replies to the circular of the committee.

2. The circumstances connected with the introduction of this nostrum into the practice of the Pennsylvania Hospital and Philadelphia Alms House Infirmary, and the extent to which it was used, and the effects attending such use.

3. The nature of the general evidence, received from various sources, respecting the alleged curative, and positively deleterious, operation of this Panacea.

4. The inference deducible from the above facts and circumstances, and the objections to the use of this, as of every other, quack medicine.

On the first point, the committee beg leave to present the following statements to the society. Dr. CHAPMAN acknowledges having 'overrated the value of the Panacea of Swaim,' and 'for a long period' he has 'entirely ceased to prescribe it,'—says he is in possession of not a few cases, which, if desired, are at the committee's service, and 'eminently calculated to alarm the public on this subject.' Sept. 29th, 1827.

Doctor GIBSON says, he has found the Panacea succeed in cases of secondary syphilis, and fail in others; and adds, "I have never found the remedy of any service in scrofula. In several cases which came under my notice, ptyalism has followed the use of it." October 25th, 1827.

Doctor DEWEES's experience of this article having been found useful, is limited to "four, or, at most, five cases;" whereas, his own practice, in which he has prescribed it several times, does not, he acknowledges, furnish a single case of any decided advantage following its use. October 26th, 1827. Doctor DEWEES does not state the evidence on which he gave his certificate to Swaim; but, it is believed, that not even half of the few favourable results now alluded to had then come under his own personal observation.

Dr. PARKE's statement, in his letter of September 28th, 1827, is, that he witnessed the case of Tregomain in the Pennsylvania Hospital; who, after being subjected to various methods of treatment, was finally cured by the somewhat prolonged use of Swaim's Panacea. The disease was 'a very obstinate malignant ulcer on her hand.' It may be well to remark, that Dr. PARKE's certificate in favour of the nostrum was furnished on the strength of this *single case*. It would be a subject of curious inquiry to ascertain



the probable number of certificates to which the practice in a large hospital would give rise in the course of a single year, if the cure of every case of a somewhat protracted disease were to lay claim to such notices. The valuable Hospital Reports published from time to time in various cities, would then give place to Hospital *Certificates*, with an effect on the march of medical improvement, of too painful a nature to be calmly contemplated.

Dr. PARKE goes on to speak of the cases of two ladies from southern states, the melancholy nature and result of which, so totally different from the tenor of his letter, will be laid before the society in a subsequent part of this report, in which it will also be seen that little, if any, credit can be attached to the Panacea as a remedial agent in Tregomain's case.\*

It seems then, from the testimony of those whose certificates in favour of Swaim's Panacea have been so much relied on by the proprietor, and his friends and coadjutors, that nothing is adduced in them calculated to inspire any confidence whatever in its use. On the contrary, Dr. CHAPMAN's having long since ceased to prescribe it, and his pointing out cases of its alarming effects, Dr. GIBSON's never having seen it succeed in scrofula, the constant failures when Dr. DEWEES has prescribed it, added to Dr. PARKE's inexperience of its use, are all circumstances well calculated to deter from recommending it. The only decided effect is that pointed out by Dr. GIBSON, of its *salivating*. The physician will, however, of course, prefer prescribing himself the medicine or combination of medicines to produce salivation, when he thinks this condition of things is required by the exigencies of the case.

The committee, on application to the resident physician of the Pennsylvania Hospital, and to the Apothecary of the Philadelphia Alms House Infirmary, have obtained the following information respecting the time when Swaim's Panacea was first introduced into the practice of those institutions, during what period it continued to be prescribed, and by whom.

Dr. CHARLES MIFFLIN, resident physician of the hospital, reports, that, as well as he can learn, Dr. PRICE was the person who first directed it, and who attended as surgeon to the hospital in the years 1822 and 1823, four months in each year. Dr. PARKE, who

\* See Appendix, A.

was at that time one of the physicians to the hospital, stated to Dr. MIFFLIN, that he never heard of the Panacea being used in any case in the practice of the house, except in that of R. Tregomain, already noticed. "No mention of Swaim's Panacea," says Dr. M. "is made in our book of apothecary's expenses for those years; from which I would infer that its use in this hospital was very short, and that what was used had been presented, for the sake of an experiment, the success of which is shown by its discontinuance from that day." Dr. M. states his having made inquiries of Drs. HEWSON, OTTO, and JOHN RHEA BARTON, gentlemen attached to the service of the hospital; and was informed by them that they never prescribed it in that institution, nor do they know of any other person using it but Dr. PRICE.

The cause of Dr. PRICE's admiration of the Panacea need not be dwelt on at present. It is sufficient to remark, that he went to Europe, in the year 1823, as agent of Swaim, for the vending and distribution of the Panacea. Of the results of this mission the world has not yet been informed.

Mr. GERARD S. MARKS, Apothecary to the Philadelphia Alms House Infirmary, reports, that, in the year 1822 or 1823, Swaim obtained permission from the managers of that Institution to give his Panacea a trial. The effects of this pretended specific were to fail entirely in six cases out of eight; and of the remaining two, one was ameliorated and the other cured. Of the whole number, five were of *scrofulous disease*, and three of *secondary syphilis*; in which last it exercised no beneficial tendency. The Panacea produced, after a few days, in the first patient, James Ray, affected with scrofula, most violent and alarming bowel complaint, accompanied by great emaciation, under which he sank, notwithstanding the discontinuance of the medicine, and the judicious prescriptions of Dr. PARRISH. In one of the cases of secondary syphilis, the Panacea seemed to produce temporary derangement; and in a few days after discontinuing its use the patient died. In another, of the same disease, the syrup of sarsaparilla prepared by the apothecary of the establishment, entirely relieved the patient, after the Panacea had failed to produce any effect.

In regard to the quantity of the Panacea used in the Alms House Infirmary, the committee have learned from Mr. MARKS, that, from the 30th December, 1822, to the 20th January, 1825,



sixty-seven bottles of this nostrum were purchased, at the cost of one hundred and sixty-seven dollars and fifty cents. Since the 20th January, 1825, "there has not one drop been purchased for the use of said institution."

The principal points of difference between the Panacea practice, and the regular treatment of scrofulous and syphilitic patients in the Alms House, are, in the greater number of failures under the former or empirical, and the violent and alarming symptoms following the use of the nostrum. The expenditure of so much money on those hazardous experiments, naturally gives rise to a feeling of regret, that a portion of the sum thus wasted had not been directed to securing to the afflicted patients the benefits of those natural agencies, such as pure country air, and suitable regimen and exercise, which experience has proved are the best auxiliaries to medical treatment: and which are at all times more successful in the hands of the benevolent, for the relief of bodily suffering and disease, than any or all of the inventions of quackery.

The sum of the Hospital practice is found in one solitary case. The Panacea was never purchased for the use of that institution, nor ever received as an article of regular prescription in it. And yet, this circumstance, together with all the facts connected with its use and discontinuance in the Alms House, staring him in the face, Wm. Swaim, in his book, bearing date, November, 1826, with more assurance than prudence, holds the following language: 'What can be more satisfactory to the public than to know, that it is used in all institutions in this country, alike eminent for the professional skill which presides over them, and the purely benevolent purposes for which they are designed—the Pennsylvania and New York Hospitals, and the Philadelphia Alms House?' If the statement is satisfactory, as it cannot fail to be useful, to the public, they are now informed that, so far as regards the Pennsylvania Hospital and Philadelphia Alms House, the assertion of Wm. Swaim is directly the reverse of truth. His Panacea is not, nor was at the time he wrote, used in either of the institutions above mentioned.

The real nature of the hitherto imposing evidence of Drs. CHAPMAN, GIBSON and DEWEES, having been exhibited, in the sense which those gentlemen, from some years additional observation of the effects of the Panacea, wish to be affixed to it, and the

entire want of support of his assertions, which Swaim can derive from public and hospital practice, having been placed in their true light; the committee next request the attention of the society, to the evidence from various quarters, respecting the effects of this medicine.

Dr. SAMUEL EMLÉN reports, that of all the patients he has met with who have used Swaim's Panacea, he has "only heard *one* say that he was benefited by its use." The first patient who came under his notice, and whose name and residence he indicates, was, in the year 1821, visited twice by him, for a scrofulous tumour. A note received from the patient, apprized Dr. EMLÉN of his having called in other medical attendance, at the solicitation of his brothers. After the lapse of a few weeks, this person called on Dr. E., apologized for his behaviour, at which he expressed great regret, and stated his having employed *Doctor Swaim*; from whom he had taken seven bottles of his Panacea, at \$5 per bottle, without any good effect. He added, that Swaim then went to the apothecary, who had formerly made up Dr. EMLÉN's prescriptions in this case, and obtained some of the very same medicine which the latter gentleman had directed, and which Swaim gave to the patient. This person having detected, immediately, the medicine by its taste and appearance, was disgusted at the trick; and, wearied with the ill success of his new doctor, discharged him. Dr. EMLÉN having received what he conceived to be a suitable apology, took the patient again under his care, who in a few weeks was entirely well.

Another case, was that of a female slave, from Charleston, with a number of scrofulous tumours, and a cough indicative of what Dr. EMLÉN conceived to be incipient phthisis pulmonalis. Influenced by his views of the case, he told the mistress of the woman, that medical treatment was not likely to be of much service. The lady then mentioned her wish, that her servant should make a trial of the Panacea of Swaim; of which she had heard and read so much, in the cure of scrofula. Dr. EMLÉN stated, in reply, his having seen it used in many cases of genuine scrofula, without any benefit whatever. On the lady's return to Charleston, however, she had the Panacea administered to the patient; and spent \$70 in the purchase of this nostrum. When she again visited Philadelphia, in the ensuing summer, she placed the slave

under the immediate care of Swaim; who continued his visits and his syrup till the patient was brought under a profuse *salivation*, when the prescriber ran away with his bottle, that she might not be tempted to take more. In vain did the mistress send message after message to the Panacea proprietor; his promises of coming directly, were never fulfilled; and the patient sank rapidly, and died, immediately after arriving at Charleston, in the autumn.

The third case given by Dr. EMLÉN, was of a boy in the Orphan Asylum, in Cherry Street, who had been for years afflicted with scrofulous tumours all over the body. The disease had been treated, without success, by the different physicians of the Institution; when the committee of management bought some of Swaim's Panacea, and placed the boy under the use of it, although Dr. EMLÉN protested against the measure, as a needless expense. The patient died before he had finished one bottle.

The fourth case furnished by Dr. EMLÉN, was of a poor woman, just above Seventh, in Cherry Street, who earned a livelihood by selling pennyworths of yest and gingerbread, &c. This person took the Panacea during two years, for some ulceration of the throat; and expended, as she declared to Dr. E., more than sixty dollars, without relief. She afterwards moved to Decatur Street, where she died some months back. Of the conduct of the proprietor and maker of the Panacea, in continually holding out hopes of amendment of her health, which were never realized, and of his language and conduct to her, when she ceased visiting him, and had told her friends that she was worse than before she began using the medicine, the committee will, for the present, forbear to speak.

The fifth case coming under the notice of Dr. EMLÉN, was of a lady ——— from Charleston, South Carolina, under Swaim's care, for ulceration of the lower lip and chin. She acknowledged to Dr. E. that she had taken twelve bottles of the Panacea, without deriving any benefit; and expressed her wish that she had thrown the money she paid for it, into the street, that some one might have been benefited by it. When this lady last visited at Dr. E.'s house, about the 20th September, she stated the excruciating pain which she had suffered all the summer, from the caustic applications of Swaim, to her chin and lip—"her under lip is entirely destroyed, by his applications, the whole length, and



she presents a horrible aspect." When asked if the disease was getting better, her reply was. "she hoped so."

Dr. EMLÉN states his having seen a number of poor sailors, who applied for admission into the Hospital, after expending all the funds they had in this and other Panaceas; and a poor carter, who told him that he had spent \$50 in Swaim's Panacea, for rheumatism, which had done him no good, and that his son had laid out \$28 in the same medicine.

The cases of two individuals, of two wealthy and well known families, to whom enormous quantities of Swaim's Panacea had been given, without any benefit, for diseases of the skin, are indicated by Dr. EMLÉN.

Dr. G. EMERSON, in a letter to the committee, dated November 1, 1827, reports cases coming under his own knowledge, in which Swaim's Panacea had been administered. The first, was of a relative of Dr. E., who was induced, by the flattering recommendation of some of her friends, to take it for the cure of a cancer. Its use was persevered in, without the knowledge of the eminent professional gentleman who attended her, or of Dr. E. himself, "until the stomach became so irritable as to be incapable of retaining sufficient food for the support of life, and the death which shortly happened, was, doubtless, hastened by inanition."

Another case was that of a young man with very severe inflammatory rheumatism, attended by two regular physicians; who, at the pressing solicitations of the family and friends, suspended their visits, in order that Swaim's Panacea might be exhibited. Swaim was sent for, and unhesitatingly promised a cure in a few days. Two weeks elapsed in the trial, and though help was still promised, and on one occasion a bottle not half emptied was taken away, and another substituted by the proprietor and vender, which was to give entire relief, the patient was no better.

Dr. EMERSON states his having known children greatly injured, by having Swaim's syrup given to them, for the removal of swellings suspected of being scrofulous, but which proving to have arisen from acute inflammation, were driven to suppuration under very aggravated circumstances.

Dr. THOMAS HARRIS, in his statement in possession of the committee, mentions, that although he never prescribed Swaim's

Panacea, yet he has witnessed the effect of its exhibition in diseases of various characters.

The first case, was of Mrs. E., who was affected with *herpes exedens* of the nose. She had been under his care at different times for two years, during which period, he succeeded in healing the ulcer several times. She afterwards resorted to Swaim's Panacea, with the effect of aggravating the ulcer, and of producing an incurable diarrhœa. During the seven years that have elapsed since she first subjected herself to Swaim's care, the ulcer has continued to increase in size.

The second case was of Capt. L., affected with indolent ulcers of the legs, who took ten bottles of the Panacea, without deriving from it the slightest benefit.

The third case recorded by Dr. HARRIS, is of Mr. K., a scrivener, afflicted with dyspepsia. This person applied for relief to Swaim, by whom, as might have been anticipated, the Panacea was prescribed. After he had taken the second bottle, he became *salivated*, and was affected with a mercurial eruption on his shoulders and face. On his showing the eruption to Swaim, the latter expressed his satisfaction at its appearance; and added, that his "medicine was driving disease out through his skin." The patient was thus encouraged to persevere in the use of the medicine, until he had taken a few bottles more. The effect was an increase of the *salivation*, and an extension of the cutaneous disease, until nearly the entire surface of the body was covered with it. Having been kept for three months in this state of profuse salivation, which was accompanied by mercurial ulcers, and extreme emaciation, the sufferer applied to Dr. HARRIS, and a medical friend of his, for relief. But it was too late; the long continued irritation produced by the Panacea, brought on ascites, or abdominal dropsy, of which he died in a few months.

Dr. HARRIS adds, that he has seen this nostrum used in several other cases, without the slightest advantage.

Dr. RANDOLPH, in reply to the circular addressed to him by the committee, states, that in consequence of the Panacea of Swaim having met with a more ready sale than other similar remedies, he has more frequently known this article to be administered. The diseases for which he has seen it given, were cancer, scrofula, and bad ulcerations, seated on various parts of the body, and

for which the medicine has been used for weeks and months; and yet, he continues, "I do most conscientiously declare, that I have never known, in a single instance, a cure to be effected by it." Dr. RANDOLPH adds, that he has attended several cases, in conjunction with Dr. PHYSICK, of ulcerations and scrofula, in which the Panacea had been largely administered; and he is authorized by this latter gentleman, whose experience, powers of observation, and perfect candour, are too well known to need eulogy in this place, "publicly to declare, that he (Dr. PHYSICK,) has never seen a single case of either scrofula, or cancer, cured by the administration of Panacea, or Catholicon; and that he entirely disapproves of their exhibition in any shape whatever."

But as any man, however awkward and unskilful a marksman he may be, will, by dint of constant shooting, occasionally hit the object at which he aims; so, to the hundreds of cases of failure and mischief from the use of the Panacea, some few may be added of less sinister tendency. From Dr. ATLEE, a practitioner of medicine in this city, and from a physician in Georgia, the committee have received notices, accompanied by two specified cases of the good effects of the nostrum.

Dr. HORNER furnishes the following information, in compliance with the resolutions of the society.

About four years ago, when Dr. HORNER took charge of the patients in the Philadelphia Alms House, three were transferred to him, who were under the use of Swaim's Panacea. Two had secondary syphilis, and one, a coloured boy, about ten years of age, had what was called a scrofulous ulcer over the cheek bone. In one of the two patients, the medicine produced distressing symptoms on the bowels, and it was found necessary to discontinue it—in the remaining two it was of no service.

About two years ago, Dr. H. had under his care a labourer from Lancaster, who was suffering from stricture of the urethra, and pain in the loins. He had taken several bottles of Swaim's Panacea without his being at all benefited.

Within the last two months, (May and June,) Dr. H. treated a gentleman from Ohio, a Mr. G., who had a small ulcer on one leg, attended with varicose veins. He had taken Swaim's Panacea without any benefit, but was cured of the ulcers in less than a week by regular treatment.



"I am now," says Dr. HORNER, "attending a lad of sixteen, Joseph H., with inflammation of the knee joint, and necrosis of the tibia. He had taken Swaim's Panacea without advantage. By regular treatment he was cured of the necrosis, and is getting well of the disease of the knee joint.

"I have lately seen a lady in the country with a pustular eruption ending in dark scales; she has been subject to it for a year or two. She has taken several bottles of Mr. Swaim's Panacea; but is not cured, neither does the medicine promise to be efficient.

"I have now under charge a coachman, who has chronic purulent discharge from the urethra, with weakness of the loins. He has taken, without advantage, Mr. Swaim's Panacea, and Mr. Scott's Panacea. The disease commenced in a gonorrhœa, which he had more than a year ago."

From the same gentleman the committee have received the details of the case of Mrs. Murray, aged fifty, a child's nurse in the family of Mr. L., of this city. This person believed herself to be affected with piles for the last fifteen years; but, on examination, the disease was found to be stricture of the rectum. After a partial division of the stricture by a bistoury, the intestine above was discovered to be in a tuberculous and schirrous state. She remained some time in the Alms House: but about the 1st of July, she retired into the country, with enfeebled strength and appetite, and increase of pain, and labouring under a slight diarrhœa. When in the country she met with one of Swaim's circulars of famous cures; and through its influence, and the over persuasions of the persons around her, was tempted to try a bottle of his Panacea. The first dose disagreed with her very much, and increased the complaint and pain in her bowels: she, however, still persevered in its use, in diminished doses, for ten or twelve days, continually growing worse under its influence. On Friday, Aug. 3d, she returned to the Alms House, in a dying state, from the effects of the medicine and disease together; and on Monday night, Aug. 6th, 1827, she expired. This patient, a day or two before her death, compared the sensation which the Panacea produced upon her to that caused by a stream of fire passing through her bowels. Examination after death showed the whole of the rec-

tum to be in a state of cancer; the small intestines slightly, and the stomach decidedly inflamed; and the liver small, white, and hard.

The committee have learned, by one of their members, that in the neighbourhood of Dumfries, in Virginia, many persons had used Swaim's Panacea; eight or ten within the knowledge of Dr. SPENCE, of that place, without deriving relief from it. Among them was a lady, whose name is in possession of the committee, who had a cutaneous eruption on the face, for which she took twelve bottles of the above nostrum, and was in consequence profusely *salivated*. She was finally cured by Dr. SPENCE with a wash of *lac sulphuris*. Another lady, whose name is also given, took three bottles of the Panacea for violent pain in the head and face, after remittent fever; but without any other effect than profuse *salivation*.

Mrs. L., of Arch street, in this city, took eight bottles of Swaim's Panacea for chronic rheumatism, without its doing her any good whatever.

W. D., in Plum street, took several bottles of Swaim's Panacea, for an ulcer of the face, without the medicine being of any service.

D. B., in Market street, took, ineffectually, Swaim's Panacea, for ulcer of the leg, with a slightly varicose state of the veins of the limb.

A servant girl, who formerly lived with Mrs. R. M., has scrofulous enlargements of the lymphatic glands of the neck, for which she was treated during six weeks by Mr. Swaim; but so far from her condition being ameliorated, the disease went on increasing.

A physician of this city has informed one of the committee, that he has had occasion to see the Panacea employed by a dozen of persons, labouring under chronic rheumatism, ulceration, and cutaneous disease, without any benefit resulting; some, on the contrary, were made worse.

Dr. COATES has sent to the committee a statement of the real nature of the much talked of case of Robert Ryan, a patient of the Pennsylvania Hospital. The man's disease was instanced as a triumph of the Panacea, after the regular methods of treatment, by the surgeons of the house, had failed; whereas the cure was the work of nature, and was accomplished by processes, for which a very long time is often demanded. Robert

Ryan suffered under a necrosis, or death of the lower part of the thigh bone; which could not, with prudence, be removed by a surgical operation, on account of the risk to the popliteal artery and nerve, and the destruction of muscles. All that could be attempted with advantage in such a case, was, to keep open the ulcers, or sores communicating with the dead and mortified bone, until this latter was separated and discharged. Of course the patient was never considered as the object of any treatment directed to the cure of his sores: they were, on the contrary, at times, dilated, and prevented from closing, for the reasons just given. The completion of the process of the separation of the dead bone, appears to have coincided with Ryan's taking the Panacea, without there being the least probability of the cure having been at all accelerated by the nostrum.\*

Doctor COATES mentions the case of a child, affected with a chronic inflammation and ulceration of the ankle joint, the termination of which, in health, in the course of a year, was predicted by a distinguished surgeon of this city. The event verified the correctness of the prognosis: but the parents, eager to expedite the cure, gave it Swaim's Panacea, for nine or ten months. This is another instance of the claims of the medicine to cure, on the mere strength of fortuitous coincidence.

Several instances have come under Dr. COATES's notice, of patients, with syphilis and gonorrhœa, who had taken the Panacea for a considerable time, without receiving any benefit from it.

Mr. KENNEDY, senior student at the Alms House, has furnished the details of the case of James Shaw. This man, thirty-one years of age, had, as he says, an attack of typhus fever, in the month of September, 1826; after recovering from which, he was seized with a dull heavy pain and swelling in the shoulder, followed by openings of a fistulous character, at the upper end of the bone, which became carious. Various methods of treatment were resorted to without effect, in the country, where he then resided. About the 1st of December, 1826, this patient consulted Swaim; who, without hesitation or inquiry, pronounced the disease to be scrofula, stating, at the same time, that his Panacea

\* See Dr. Reynell Coates's letter, [A] in which it is shown that the Panacea had no share in the cure.



was the wonderful and only curative of this complaint, as well as of every other description of running sores. The Panacea was, accordingly, taken by Shaw for three or four months, without any benefit; but with the effect of producing a burning sensation in the stomach, and, in the course of a few days, a copperish taste in the mouth, and, after the lapse of some weeks, a disordered state of the bowels, which continued for upwards of a fortnight.

The committee, on a review of all the testimony presented to them, and a portion of which they have placed before the Society, find that the claims set forth by Swaim in favour of his Panacea, as a surpassing remedy for *Scrofula*, and on its success in which disease he rests so much of its merits, are not only without support in fact, but are entirely set at nought by the result of numerous cases, and the experience of some of our most cautious and celebrated surgeons and physicians. The opinions, deduced from extensive observation and very many facts, during several years past, by Drs. PHYSICK, GIESON, RANDOLPH and EMLIN, are conclusive of the comparative inefficacy of the remedy in scrofula. The annals of medicine, and even popular experience and tradition, furnish a much larger proportion of cures of this disease, in its various forms and stages, accomplished by means familiar to every physician, than are proved by its proprietor and his friends to have been performed by the administration of the Panacea. A well regulated diet, and the change of residence from town to country, from a close, damp and impure air, to one clear, elastic and invigorating, have done more in this disease than all the nostrums ever invented: and when medicinal agents are to be had recourse to, the use of the various alteratives, mineral and vegetable, of the *Materia Medica*, under the guidance of practised judgment and careful reasoning and comparison, promise more decided, and, at the same time, salutary results, than any one agent or composition, given without knowledge of cause, and too generally without regard to the modifications of effect.

Of the curative powers of the Panacea of Swaim in *Cancer*, it is needless to speak: no evidence whatever of any the slightest efficacy of the nostrum in this dreadful disease, has been furnished to the committee. The adverse testimony is, however, strong in proof of its entire failure, in cancer.

The alleged good effects of this nostrum in that class, or,

rather, the varieties of disease, classed under the heads of *Secondary Syphilis*, *Pseudo Syphilis*, and *Mercurial Disease*, are not of such a nature as to bespeak any extraordinary confidence in its use, or to entitle it to a preference over known articles in the *Materia Medica*. Admitting to its full extent the imperfect testimony in favour of the Panacea, in secondary syphilis, it does not possess, thereby, any claims superior to what might be put forth for diaphoretics, of which opium is the basis; or sarsaparilla and its adjuncts, constituting what has been called the Lisbon Diet Drink, or the Compound Syrup of Sarsaparilla; or, finally, a well regulated regimen alone. But if a name is required to give a charm to the composition, the Rob of l'Affecteur, or the Syrup of Cuisinier, as prepared by the regular apothecary, ought, in all cases, to be preferred to the Panacea.

That disease called *mercurial*, as presented to the physician in hospital practice, is for the most part a hybrid, being the offspring of syphilis, and the mercury administered with a view to the cure of this latter. In other cases, of less frequent occurrence, it is the direct consequence of the excessive and injudicious use of mercury. The so much boasted powers of the Panacea, have been directed to the cure of the former variety of this malady, with, we may presume, though we have no positive evidence of the fact, some benefit. But this moderate success affords no proof of the superior advantages to be derived from the nostrum in question, and would scarcely merit notice, were it not for the inference which has been attempted to be artfully drawn from it. It has been loudly proclaimed, that a medicine which combats and destroys the noxious effects of mercury, cannot, of course, have any mercury in its composition; and an additional argument is thus adduced in favour of its superior mildness and efficacy. The reply to all this sophistry is obvious and natural. The Panacea which salivates, as that of Swaim so often does, cannot be brought forward as a remedy for diseases induced by the excessive use of mercury: but a common variety of the Panacea, from which its proprietor has excluded corrosive sublimate in its preparation, will, like any other syrup of sarsaparilla, and its vegetable adjuncts, be often useful in the mercurial disease. Still, the patient has no chance, in the hands of ignorance, viz. of nostrum makers, and venders, of a selection being made for him,

and, even though his disease be mercurial, he is in danger of taking a succession of doses of the Panacea, similar to those which first salivated, and finally brought poor K. to his end. The casual success of any Panacea or nostrum whatever, is not, in the disease under consideration, any evidence of its superior efficacy, or proof of its differing, in its constituent articles, from medicines used on such occasions, by many professional men. And it will hardly be asserted, except by implication in the unqualified praise of their friends, that ignorance of the common laws of the animal economy on the part of the proprietors of such nostrums, and the want of knowledge in the patient of all the cautionary rules growing out of the stage of the disease, and his peculiar habits and constitution during their use, furnish any strong claims for public countenance and favour, towards this class of medicines.

Of the very large number of cases of chronic and mercurial *Rheumatism* in which the Panacea has been used, instances of cures have been stated; but from what has come under the knowledge of the committee, they are not, by any means, prepared to regard it as equal to very many regular methods of treatment, recognized by the medical profession. The proportion of cures to failures, is too small to warrant any confidence in it.

The assumption of the conspicuously good effects of Swaim's Panacea in *ulcers of the throat*, and in "almost every disease of an ulcerous nature," has not been sustained by the facts before the committee. The use of enormous quantities of this medicine in some cases during many months, and even in one instance for years, has been productive of any thing but a cure for the ulcers, for which it was so confidently recommended.

In *Cutaneous Eruptions*, the nostrum in question has too often failed to entitle it to commendation in such circumstances. The case of the lady near Dumfries, in Virginia, who took twelve bottles of the Panacea for cutaneous disease, without any effect, except profuse salivation, has been already mentioned. The medicine by which she was finally cured, ought, by the rules of evidence received in favour of charlatanism, to be published as a never failing cosmetic, and remover of all cutaneous blemishes; the more especially since medical records abound with examples of the curative powers of sulphur in this class of maladies.

"*Dyspeptic complaints*" are adduced among those which the



Panacea of Swaim is intended to cure. Without dwelling on the vagueness of the term dyspepsia, and the numerous tribe of disordered sensations classed under it, it is sufficient at present to remark, that in no form of disease to which the human frame is subject, is a knowledge of its remote and exciting causes of such paramount necessity as in dyspepsia. Without a removal of these causes, usually found in the mode of life of the invalid, any medicine, or combination of medicines, will, so far from relieving, be too often found to exasperate the disease. Yet no such conditions are exacted by the proprietor and venders of Panacea; a liberal potation of the syrup is with them the *sine qua non*; whilst exemption from all the rules derived from experience of past ages, and reasoning and feeling, is claimed by the person who agrees to take this medicine. Of its pernicious effects in most of the forms of dyspepsia and disordered bowels, the committee conceive it their duty to speak explicitly; and to caution against the use of that which tends to irritate and inflame the stomach, already prone to inflammation, if not actually suffering under this state, in the disease under question. The comparison made by Mrs. Murray, of the sensation produced by the Panacea, to a stream of fire passing through her bowels, coupled with the case of Mrs. E., in whom it produced incurable diarrhœa, and that recorded by Dr. EMERSON, of irremediable inability of the stomach to retain food after its use, are admonitions of too powerful and melancholy a nature to be readily overlooked, or soon forgotten. The peculiarly afflicting case of Mr. K., the scrivener, who took Panacea for dyspepsia, and the fatal case of ulceration of the intestines from its use, as recorded by Dr. HOPKINSON,\* are likewise commentaries on the nature of such medicines, and the ignorance of their proprietors, which must be understood by the least discerning, and produce sympathy in the most unfeeling.

It would be a source of great gratification to the committee, if they could, in imitation of the proprietor of the Panacea, say, that 'this medicine is entirely harmless,' and "that it may be given without hesitation, or the least apprehension of danger, alike to the most tender infant, and the adult, with equally beneficial results." The preceding cases show the utter fallacy of this assertion, and

\* See Appendix [B].

that the syrup, in the manner in which it is often compounded by the proprietor, and prescribed by him and others, is eminently calculated to destroy the digestion and undermine the powers of life. Every reflecting person must be struck with the revolting contradiction exhibited by the friends of the Panacea, in claiming for it great power over the most obstinate diseases, and yet calling it perfectly harmless. No such agent ever has been, or can possibly be, demonstrated to operate either on the physical or moral nature of man. With the possession of properties capable of doing good, is the correspondent ability extensively and deeply to injure by their misapplication. Poisons of the most active class may sometimes be taken in minute doses, without exhibiting any deleterious effects; as we see in the preparations of arsenic, and in corrosive sublimate, occasionally prescribed by medical men. But we should be at a loss to find language sufficiently expressive of our surprise and indignation, if, on the strength of such occasional immunity, any person could be found so lost to reason and feeling as to say that Fowler's Arsenical Solution, and corrosive sublimate, disguised in syrup, might be freely given to the most tender infant, and that they were perfectly harmless.

It will be seen that, in this first stage of the inquiry, the committee have confined themselves to noticing the various effects of the Panacea, without instituting a scrutiny into its composition. They have endeavoured to ascertain the nature of its operation on the animal economy, in the same manner as they would have investigated the properties of a new article of the *materia medica*. But, in doing so, they are not disposed to regard the Panacea as a preparation hitherto unknown to the medical practitioner, or the constituent parts of which are not frequently employed by him in the treatment of disease. Had the committee been willing to avail themselves of all the means of perquisition which justice would seem to require, they might, perhaps, have obtained direct evidence to this effect. For the present, they prefer exhibiting to the society circumstantial evidence, and collateral proofs, which may be said, in this case, necessarily to lead to conviction. The history of the introduction of this syrup into general use, and the recipe for its preparation, as well as the circumstances under which it was obtained, are very clearly set forth in the Report of the Medical Society of the city of New York, on Swain's Panacea,

and other depurative syrups; drawn up by Drs. PASCALIS, HAMERSLEY, DRAKE, MANLY and WATTS. It appears from this report, that about the year 1811, Dr. BERGER, the elder, was joined in consultation with several physicians of New York, in the case of a gentleman labouring under a loathsome complication of disease, the sequelæ of syphilis, and the repeated and irregular use of mercury, which had resisted all the ordinary modes of treatment; and at his (Dr. BERGER's) suggestion, the Rob of l'Affecteur was given, and with good effects. "The remarkable recovery of this gentleman, and the difficulty of obtaining an adequate supply of the rob for extensive use, owing to the restrictions that at that time existed in our commercial intercourse with Europe, led Dr. McNEVIN, who was one of the physicians in consultation, to give publicity to its composition and its worth. He accordingly published, in the third volume of the Medical and Philosophical Journal and Review, the recipe of M. ALLION, a French chemist, for its preparation. The remedy prepared according to this recipe, with the exception of substituting the bark of sassafras, or the shavings of guaiacum for the marsh reed-grass, was soon after employed by several of our city practitioners, with the usual happy results. Among many patients, Mr. Swaim, then a book binder, living in this city, experienced its beneficial effects *in his own person*; and soon after succeeded in obtaining from Dr. N. J. QUACKENBOSCH, the practitioner who had administered it to him, the recipe for its formation, and the directions for its employment: whereupon, he removed to Philadelphia, and set forth the vegetable syrup, which he denominated Swaim's Panacea, for the treatment of those diseases for which the rob had been so long celebrated. In the first instance, Mr. Swaim's directions for using his panacea, for preparing the sarsaparilla ptisan, and the quantity and times of taking it, in conjunction with the syrup, were the same, nearly verbatim, as those given by Dr. McNEVIN, in the publication above referred to, for the use of the rob; but of late he has altered the directions considerably, and has ceased to insist on the conjoined use of the sarsaparilla ptisan, even in small quantities. The flavour of the sassafras in the syrup first prepared by Swaim was very perceptible; but it is now the opinion of many that he has substituted the leaves of the Pipsisewa (*Chimaphila corymbosa* of Pursh) for the marsh reed grass, sassafras, or guaiacum, which we



think very probable. However this may be, the syrup also contains the oil of winter green; (ol gaultheriæ;) for its flavour is evident both to the smell and taste. Swaim's object in this addition is doubtless to disguise the other materials, and to render the medicine agreeable to the taste; but it may also be a useful addition as a stimulant and carminative, obviating that loathing and disgust of the medicine, which sometimes occurs from its long continued use."\*

To this interesting statement the committee will add, that when Swaim first began to vend his syrup in this city, in the year 1820, the taste of honey was very perceptible in it, as in the original French preparation; but of late years the syrup appears to have been made for the most part, if not entirely, of sugar. The addition of the winter green serves still more to disguise its taste and the nature of the other ingredients. Had Swaim stopped here, evidence similar to that adduced in favour of the French prepara-

\* That physicians generally may have it in their power to prescribe the syrup of sarsaparilla, to which Swaim has affixed the title of Panacea, we subjoin the recipe of M. Allion, above alluded to.

R. Rad. Sarsap.

Arund. Phragmit.  $\bar{a}\bar{a}$ .  $\bar{\zeta}$ xxx.

Flor. Borag. Offic.  $\bar{\zeta}$ viii.

Fol. Sennæ.

Flor. Rosar.  $\bar{a}\bar{a}$ .  $\bar{\zeta}$ ii.

Sacchar.

Mel. Opt.  $\bar{a}\bar{a}$ .  $\bar{\text{H}}$ vi.

Boil the sarsaparilla and marsh reed grass, in nine pints of water, for one hour; strain off the decoction, and pour the same quantity of water on the residuum, which is to be boiled for two hours: towards the end of the boiling, add the borage flowers, senna and rose leaves; then strain off; and to both decoctions, add the sugar and honey, and boil the whole to the consistence of a syrup.

The principal difference between this, and the recipe for the syrup of sarsaparilla, as given in the French Codex, consists in the omission of the reed grass, and the introduction of aniseed, and in the mode of preparation. This recipe was adopted by the compilers of the United States Pharmacopœia, which was formed in 1820, by merely substituting liquorice root for the borage flowers. The ordinary dose, is two to three ounces twice a day; with, or without a grain of corrosive sublimate added to each pound. The patient, at the same time, is to take freely of sarsaparilla decoction, or ptisan. The diet will, of course, be regulated by the medical attendant in accordance with his knowledge of the stage of the disease, and the peculiarities in the constitution of the patient.

The preparation, as directed by the French Codex, is nearly the same as the *Sirap de Cuisinier*, which has been for some years used in the Philadelphia Almshouse Infirmary. It is made up by most of our apothecaries: and both on the score of efficaciousness and moderate price, is entitled to a decided preference over any of the Panaceas.

tion might have been extended to his; with the large reservations required by his want of knowledge of pharmacy and of medicine, and the continual misapplication of the remedy, by a wrong selection of cases: but, in an evil hour, the plan of mixing corrosive sublimate with at least certain parcels of his Panacea was adopted; and ignorance, vexatious before, was then armed with an instrument of mischief and destruction.

It must be familiar to most medical men, that a certain portion of corrosive sublimate can be suspended in vegetable syrup, and so blended as to defy detection by chemical analysis: and it has been ascertained, that the Rob de l'Affecteur has contained this mercurial salt, in the proportion of a grain, or a grain and a half, to a pint, without its presence being made sensible by chemical tests. This circumstance will explain our inability to discover the existence of mercury in certain nostrums, except by their peculiar effects; such as salivation, and the train of disorders of the digestive organs and nervous system, following the injudicious use of the mineral. Submitted to this test, the Panacea of Swaim has, beyond all doubt or equivocation, mercury as one of the ingredients frequently, though not constantly, entering into its composition. If occasion required it, a most voluminous mass of testimony might be collected in proof of this position. Some strong facts have been already placed before the Society to show the sialagogue or salivating property of the Panacea. Dr. GIBSON avers, that, in several cases which came under his notice, salivation followed the use of it. The testimony of Drs. EMLÉN, HARRIS, HORNER, HOPKINSON, and GRIFFITH,\* is conclusive to the same effect. Among other documents on this head, the committee have been furnished with the case of a gentleman near Petersburg in Virginia, advanced in life, who took the Panacea for several large ulcers on his legs and various parts of his body. After he had finished one bottle, and commenced on the second, he suffered from severe salivation, and an inflammation and swelling of the glands of the mouth. He now desisted from its use, and, after a time, entirely recovered from the salivation: but a fresh trial of the nostrum was followed by the same effects as before, viz. profuse salivation. The dose in which this gentleman first used the

\* See Appendix (C); in which Dr. Griffith relates the history of a case of salivation from the use of the Panacea, followed by fatal hæmorrhage.

Panacea was a wine-glass-ful; but his stomach could not bear this, and he reduced the quantity to a tea-spoon-ful three times a day. The appearance of mercurial eruptions, and the disorder of the stomach and bowels, sometimes of an incurable nature, consequent on the use of the Panacea, are also still farther illustrative of its mercurial character. Reference may be instructively made to Dr. S. JACKSON's letter on this subject.\*

The committee, after a careful examination of the evidence, both written and verbal, submitted to them, respecting the sensible properties, presumed composition, and curative and deleterious effects on the animal economy, of Swaim's Panacea, are led to the following conclusions and opinions.—This syrup, when free from any mercurial preparation, not only fails to exhibit virtues as a curative agent superior to various compound decoctions and syrups of sarsaparilla, which have been administered in the regular practice of medicine for the last two hundred and fifty years, in the different stages of syphilis, and in chronic rheumatism and cutaneous complaints, but is inferior in efficacy to some of them, as well on account of the variableness of its composition, as from the occasional loss of the medical properties, and the adulteration of certain articles entering into it. In so large a manufactory as that of Swaim, where no supervision can be exercised on the part of a physician, nor rival efforts made by apothecaries, we are deprived of the usual pledges that the composition called Panacea shall be of uniform strength and freshness; and hence, one cause, in addition to others already assigned, of its frequent failures, in the class of diseases, so many of which are benefited by the syrup of sarsaparilla, properly prepared and judiciously administered.

When the syrup contains corrosive sublimate, the preparation is still more objectionable. While all physicians are aware of the occasional efficacy of mercury, in certain stages of syphilis, and in scrofula, cutaneous diseases, ulcers, and hepatic affections, they are also well apprized of the caution with which this metal must be administered under any form, and of the great delicacy and skill requisite in the selection of cases of the above mentioned maladies, in which it can be used without producing serious, and too often irreparable mischief. It is this knowledge which has always made

\* See Appendix [D].



medical men so wary, in the use of this as well as other powerful articles of the *materia medica*. But that empirics, ignorant and consequently regardless of the necessity of such caution, have, at the expense of the health and lives of thousands, performed some cures by the indiscriminate use, or rather shameful abuse of mercury, especially of corrosive sublimate, and of arsenic, is a fact of frequent recurrence in the history of popular errors. We are not in possession of any salutary exceptions to the baneful tendency of the pretensions of empirics to allay suffering and cure disease. The Panacea of Swaim is on the same footing with all the quack medicines which have so often preceded its introduction. Imperfect admixture and suspension of the corrosive sublimate, and, of course, comparative inertness of one portion of the syrup, and the most deleterious and poisonous effects of the other, are some of the evils attendant on its secret manufacture. If to these be added, the indiscriminate recommendation of the Panacea for every form of disease, to persons ignorant of the nature and stage of their malady, ignorant of what they are swallowing, and totally unable to foresee, and of course unprepared to prevent or mitigate, its deleterious effects, or to avail themselves in time of the counsel and assistance of their regular medical advisers, a faint idea may be entertained of the mischief which has ensued on the use of this so much and so fatally lauded nostrum. The committee have already spoken of the pretensions of its proprietor to cure, by its means, certain specified diseases. They have exhibited the utter fallacy of these pretensions; and will now add their conviction, founded on experience, that when the same, or nearly a similar formula has been prescribed by the regular physician, success has followed its use in cases in which the Panacea had either failed to do good or was injurious. The reason of this difference of result is obviously to be found in the judicious *timing* of a remedy on the part of a physician; a word which has no place in the vocabulary of a quack, any more than the practice could be appreciated by his limited capacity. But were the merits of this or any other Panacea or quack medicine of even a decided nature, the insurmountable objection remains against receiving, under any circumstances, into medical practice, or of fostering by medical eulogy, the use of a secret compound; since there is so little certainty of its uniform preparation, that the recommenda-

tion of a bottle of Panacea to day, cannot apply to another bottle prepared to-morrow. The power withheld from the members of the medical faculty of exercising any supervision and correction in this secret manufacture, is not compensated for by any pledge which the individual, who claims the exclusive right, can furnish, on the score of talents, education, or philanthropy. No physician could conscientiously prescribe, nor apothecary vend, calomel or tartar emetic, prepared, no matter by whom, if, on inquiry and comparison, the different portions of the article were of unequal strength, and possessed of different chemical properties: still less could a physician or apothecary, with any shadow of propriety, extend the slightest countenance or encouragement to any one who should arrogate to himself the exclusive right of preparing calomel or tartar emetic, and yet refuse permission for competent persons to witness his manufacture, and to point out the errors in his mode of conducting it.

It is a matter of deep regret to the committee, as they are well assured it has long been to the society, that circumstances should render it necessary to enforce a position, the truth of which has always been admitted by the thinking men in every profession, and which was received as an axiom among physicians. A hope may now, however, be reasonably entertained, that, although the correctness of the general principle has not, as in former times, carried with it entire conviction, the direct specification of facts will, in future, produce unanimity of sentiment among medical men, notwithstanding the partial aberration into which some of them may, in a moment of misplaced good nature, have been betrayed. The time is now come, or, more correctly speaking, the necessity is as urgent as ever, for a line of demarcation to be drawn between the advocates of empiricism, with all its unavoidably attendant train of evils, and the rightful members of a liberal profession, the friends of learning and of science. What physician, who retains the high conscientious feelings of his noble calling, will subject himself to the imputation of conniving with error for the wages of imposture? Or will the eulogist of empirics and empiricism, console himself with the hard alternative of escaping judgment of corruption, at the expense of his understanding; even though an observing world should allow him the option of his sentence?

Another evil, of scarcely less magnitude than the one which

the committee have just been deprecating, is the currency given by the daily press to every garbled and partial statement of cures, alleged to have been effected by the various nostrums now in vogue. This course is greatly at variance with the presumed duties of newspaper editors, who are not wont, in matters alien from party politics, to be the ready echoes of ex-parte statements, which may exercise a pernicious influence over the health and morals of the community. In this instance, however, their laudatory notices, whether original or republished, are well calculated to encourage a worse than lottery gambling among their poorer and less enlightened fellow citizens; by leading these latter to an expenditure of money entirely beyond their means, for which not one out of a hundred receives an adequate equivalent; while very many have their health irreparably injured. It is, at present, inconceivable, how some, who value themselves on their ripe scholarship, and who are, commonly, so prone to dilate on their sensitive regard for the public weal and the cause of justice, should signalize themselves on this occasion, as eulogists of ignorant conjecture and random experiment, even to the exclusion, in their papers, of counter and more correct statements of the true nature of the alleged wonder-working powers of Panaceas.

The best commentary on this systematized abetting of the cause of empiricism, is to be met with in the increased number of empirics, and the greater boldness and presumptuous ignorance of those who were the first in the successful career of deception. The Panacea of Swaim was used in cancerous affections, and was found to fail so signally in producing any salutary effect, as to compel its proprietor to desist from recommending it in such cases. But mark the consequence. In place of retiring abashed from public notice, Mr. Swaim, who had persuaded physicians to certify in favour of his Panacea, by alleging his ignorance of diseases and of remedies, and expressing his wish merely to prepare a useful compound, to be prescribed by them, now assumes the province of a surgeon, and, emboldened by past immunity from merited censure, asserts his ability to cure cancers, by certain plasters and preparations, known, as he avers, to himself alone. Swayed by the authority of the certificates of some physicians, and the frequent puffs of newspaper editors in praise of the Panacea, Mrs. \*\*\*\*, a lady from South Carolina, placed herself



under Swaim's care, for a corroding ulcer of the cheek and nose. After the lapse of a certain time, and the application of a plaster, which was said to have "drawn out the cancer by the root," the public was duly apprized, in the *National Gazette*, of the wonderful cure alleged to have been effected on this lady, after all the skill of the medical faculty had failed to afford relief. The facts are, that, though the disease was, for a while, alleviated, by means familiar to the profession, it was never cured; and is now in a worse state than before. The notoriety of this case, in consequence of conversational and newspaper puffs, induced another lady, with a cancerous affection of the chin and lip, also from South Carolina, to place herself under this new cancer doctor, of one who acknowledged that he knew nothing about diseases or remedies. Her condition has been adverted to in Dr. EMLÉN'S communication. The third case was of a lady from Maryland, who, notwithstanding the advice of her distinguished medical attendant, to avoid harsh measures for her disease, a cancer of the breast, had recourse to Swaim, to *cure* her. He was intrusted to do that which he never could do, on the strength of what he had never done. After many months of acute suffering from his applications, and with her disease aggravated, she has abandoned the Panacea man, and is now under the care of Drs. PHYSICK and HORNER. Facts of this nature are pregnant with instruction. If the experience of former times, and the lessons of sound and practised judgment, had been allowed their proper weight, they ought never to have happened. The responsibility for their occurrence must, perhaps, be divided; and each one concerned will, no doubt, endeavour to incur as small a share as possible.

The information obtained by the committee, in reply to the circular of the Medical Society, has been chiefly on the subject of the Panacea of Swaim: but, as far as facts have come to their knowledge, there is every reason to believe, that the other Panaceas, and the Catholicon, and Columbian Syrup, are, in composition and general effects, similar to, if not identical with, the nostrum of Swaim. The proprietors and venders of all of them publish accounts of wonderful cures, performed by their use; but all ought to be viewed with equal mistrust, and, for the reasons already given, be treated with no favour by the regular practi-

tioner, who regards himself as one of the guardians of the health of his fellow citizens.

The cases which have been related to the committee, of the harsh and violent effects of a preparation, sold under the name of Swaim's Vermifuge, warrant their cautioning their medical brethren against its use ; and urging them, as far as their influence extends, to forbid mothers, or heads of families, from giving to their children, a mixture, which, at times, operates with all the harshness of a poison.

W. E. HORNER, Chairman,	} Committee.
THOS. HARRIS,	
JOSEPH KLAPP,	
CHARLES D. MEIGS,	
JOHN BELL,	

December 15, 1827.

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## APPENDIX.

[A]—p. 5.

SUCH extensive mischief has resulted to the public, and more particularly to the poorer classes of the community, from the countenance injudiciously given to various empirical nostrums, by members of the medical profession, that it becomes the duty of every one who regards the proper interests of society, to expose, as far as possible, the fallacy of the evidence urged in favour of their *miraculous* powers. With this view, I tender you the following remarks.—

Mr. Swaim, armed with a certificate, signed by Dr. WILLIAM PRICE, and another by SAMUEL MASON, the one at the time a Surgeon, and the other a former steward of the Pennsylvania Hospital, has asserted, that his Panacea received the sanction of the Surgeons of that Institution, and that its effects were attended with the happiest results in those cases in which it was employed.

The facts of the case are these. By the express desire of Dr.

WILLIAM PRICE, the two managers then on duty permitted a trial of the Panacea, under the superintendence of Mr. Swaim.

This permission was necessary, on account of a law of the Hospital, which prohibited any practitioner from interfering with the treatment of the patients, unless he was regularly elected an officer of the institution; and, as the introduction of Mr. Swaim, did undoubtedly give great offence to some of Dr. PRICE's colleagues in office, the step could not have been taken without the sanction of the managers. But, in granting this sanction, those gentlemen transcended their prerogative, and encroached upon that of the board.

The remedy was employed regularly, in only two cases that I can recollect; and one other employed it after leaving the Hospital. The former, to whom the certificate of Dr. PRICE refers, were, Mrs. Tregomain, a woman of a scrofulous diathesis, affected with extensive ulceration of the hand and cheek, apparently resulting from disease of the periosteum; and Owen Laughlin—with necrosis of the upper jaw, on the left side.

In the absence of my senior colleague, Dr. T. H. RITCHIE, those patients fell properly to my care, as House-Surgeon, some time before their discharge; but, as I was unwilling to associate myself in any manner with Mr. Swaim, I took no charge of those cases, merely contenting myself with silently watching the progress of the disease.

That Mrs. Tregomain improved under the use of the Panacea, is certainly true, and that she left the house nearly well, is also true; but I can only account for the unqualified language of Dr. PRICE's certificate, by supposing that his sanguine admiration of a remedy, which shortly after led him to Europe, as its avowed disseminator, must have induced him to believe, too readily, and without sufficient examination, the apparent proofs of permanent cure, for I well recollect to have seen a *discharge from one of the ulcers on the cheek the very day of her quitting the Hospital*. Add to this, that Mrs. Tregomain assured me that her disease had been nearly cured at several different times, previous to her admission into the Hospital; and that, at the time of commencing the use of the Panacea, she had been for some time improving by the effect of other remedies; and we shall be inclined to doubt the very superior agency of the nostrum in this case.

This unfortunate woman went to Charleston or Savannah, with a professed, but illegal protector, who died there; and she subsequently destroyed herself by taking laudanum. I was informed by a gentleman who had received a letter from her landlord, during the inquiries growing out of the refusal of several spurious drafts of her companion, on a wealthy house in this city, that her despair was the result of her inability to gain a livelihood, *in consequence of the condition of her hand, which was "covered with sores."*

With regard to the case of Owen Laughlin, my recollection is clear, that I was astonished at the employment of the Panacea, in a case that must speedily terminate favourably by the powers of nature. The patient had a necrosed jaw, with the sequestrum loose. It came away in a short time, as might have been expected; and the patient recovered.

The same remedy was also employed in the case of a seaman, by the name of Anderson; but this patient was not placed under my eye, and I have no recollection of it.

Robert Ryan, to whom the certificate of SAMUEL MASON refers, was affected with necrosis, which destroyed nearly all the shaft of the bone; he generally enjoyed good health during the periods which elapsed between the removal of the sequestra; and at these times he officiated as an assistant in the surgical wards: so that the picture of misery which he is said to have suffered during the whole time of his residence in the Hospital, is certainly drawn in colours far too deep for nature. Robert suffered exceedingly at times, when a sequestrum was loosening rapidly, as occurred perhaps two or three times a year, during four or five years that I watched the case—at other times he was a gay and lively man, having no more pain to contend with, than is usual in necrosis. His last sequestrum came away while I was absent; but I have been informed, both by his physicians and himself, that, on this occasion the entire upper part of the dead shaft of the bone was removed, and Robert recovered his health with great rapidity. During this convalescence he commenced the use of the Panacea, and perhaps the most that can be said, is, that it did not retard the cure.

Thus it will be seen, that the Panacea has never been properly



introduced into the Pennsylvania Hospital; and that the few cases in which it was employed were ill selected, and of doubtful result.

R. COATES, M. D.

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[B]—pp. 19. 23.

*Case of Death following the Use of the Panacea of Swaim; transmitted in a letter from Dr. HOPKINSON to the Committee.*

A young married woman came under my care, several years since; chiefly on account of a partial ankylosis of the hip-joint, on the right side. She was, moreover, much emaciated; and had not menstruated for a considerable time, which she attributed to exposure to cold. From her own account, it would appear, that most of her complaints arose from rheumatism; under which she had so long suffered, that her constitution appeared completely broken down. She had what I would term the scrofulous diathesis. The affection of the hip, she affirmed, was the result of exposure to a current of air, and had been considered and treated, ever since, entirely as rheumatic. In addition to this, she had, in the groin of the same side, a fistulous orifice, from which was discharged, in moderate quantity, a watery secretion. Further particulars, not being essential to the objects of this history, are omitted.

She was, at the time I saw her first, under the use of the Panacea, of which she had taken, as well as I can remember, nearly two bottles. This medicine was immediately laid aside, and she was treated mildly, according to the symptoms, the minutiae of which are not recollected, with a moderate diet, &c. She took, for some time, however, HOOPER's pills, for the purpose of keeping her bowels soluble, and with a hope, at the same time, of restoring the menstrual discharge. All that was done for her seemed to effect no improvement in her condition. Finally, at the urgent solicitation of her mother and herself, she was permitted to discontinue all other medicines, and to resume the use of the Panacea; which, I may observe, had been originally given to her to cure her rheumatism. Accordingly, another bottle was sent for.

A short time after this, she complained of great soreness of her mouth and throat; which resulted in a salivation, followed by diarrhœa of the most obstinate nature. These symptoms were immediately attributed to the pills which I had ordered; nor could I ever convince her, that not a grain of mercury had been given to her in my prescriptions. In this belief she died, about a week or two after the appearance of the two last named symptoms.

Before her decease, I had, from my suspicions, questioned her mother, concerning the directions the latter had received, as to the manner of using the Panacea, &c. Her unbiassed and unpretending account was to the following effect: That, first, a white powder was put into an empty bottle in her presence—that this bottle was then filled, down stairs, with the syrup, and she directed, always to shake the bottle well before the medicine was given. This injunction was faithfully and fatally pursued. Drs. HODGE and HAYS both saw the case, previous to its termination; and assisted in the post mortem examinations, which developed the following state of things within.

The orifice upon the thigh, led to an extensive sinus, which had originated in a caries of some of the vertebræ. The hip-joint was not examined, but it had no connexion whatever with the sinus. In the bowels were found the most important marks of disease; for, throughout nearly the whole tract of the primæ viæ, we discovered ulcers in the mucous coat, of various sizes, and such as are said to arise from the inordinate effects of corrosive sublimate. These, at once, explained the symptoms, the obstinacy, and the result of this unfortunate case.

The presumptive conclusion, therefore, is, that this woman took corrosive sublimate, in the syrup given to her; and that from it arose those ulcerations, which induced the diarrhœa, and finally destroyed her.

I. P. HOPKINSON, M. D.

*Case of Death from Hæmorrhage, following the Use of the Panacea of Swaim; recorded in a letter from Dr. GRIFFITH to the Committee.*

The only quack medicine alluded to in your circular of June last, of which I have been enabled to judge, is "Swaim's Panacea." This I have seen administered in several cases, generally without producing any beneficial effects. In one case, however, of obstinate and ill conditioned ulcers, it was certainly of use. Of its dangerous nature when taken without due attention, I met with a melancholy instance soon after its introduction. In 182-, I was called to a man, at that time residing in Blackberry Alley, said to be dying of hæmorrhage. I found him discharging great quantities of blood from his mouth and nose, and threatened with suffocation from his inability to rise. The flow proceeded from large and deep ulcerations of the mouth, which implicated several small arteries. By the usual means, the hæmorrhage was arrested. On inquiry, I found that he had been afflicted with rheumatic pains, for some time, for which some friends had recommended Swaim's Panacea: he had taken about three or four bottles, when it produced a violent salivation, which ended in extensive sloughing of the jaws. He declared that he had taken no other medicine. Next day, I requested Dr. HAYS to see him with me, which he did. The man remained in a tolerably comfortable situation for a day or two; when the hæmorrhage again occurred, and, before any assistance could be rendered, he sank under the discharge.

R. EGLESFIELD GRIFFITH, M. D.

*Statement of the Effects of Swaim's Panacea.* By Dr. JACKSON.

The first knowledge I had of Swaim's Panacea, was in the winter of 1821-22. My younger brother, from an injury received in the ankle joint, had long been labouring under a chronic inflammation of its ligaments, and probably its cartilages; and

which eventuated in ankylosis. A small sinus remained, from which was occasionally discharged a sero-purulent fluid, never exceeding a few drops at a time.

A zealous partizan of the Panacea, became very urgent that my brother should give it a trial. Satisfied that no means could remedy the condition of the joint; and that time, with warm weather, to admit of exercise, was alone required to restore his general strength, I was opposed to the quackery that was so much desired. At this time, a young lad of this city, Master W., was taking the Panacea, for a disease of the hip-joint; and, it was asserted boldly, was recovering from its employment. In a few months after, however, he died. A man whose neck was covered with scars, said to proceed from ulcers cured by the Panacea, was brought to my brother and the family, as a specimen of its wondrous powers. These means created so powerful an impression on the minds of my brother and mother, that they became very solicitous to employ it; and, believing no harm would probably result from its use, I withdrew my opposition, and my brother commenced taking the Panacea. I examined the first bottle that was procured; and immediately pronounced it to be the syrup of Cuisinier, a remedy I had been accustomed to prepare, and prescribe in old cutaneous ulcerations, and syphiloid affections. My opinion was, however, attributed to professional prejudice.\*

At this time, Mr. Swain requested me to accompany him to visit a patient in Kensington, affected, as he said, with a cancer, and who was about to commence with his medicine—that I might be satisfied of its powers. This patient was Mrs. Hooker; whose case is detailed very imperfectly in Swain's pamphlet of "Cases cured, &c." page 37; and of which a certificate was given by the late Dr. KNIGHT.

\* In my brother, no marked effect resulted from the Panacea at first. It was continued until he had taken six or eight bottles. While under its use, a slight cough came on that was attributed to cold: it grew worse; became unyielding; and finally, the unequivocal symptoms of tuberculous phthisis were unfolded. Early in the spring, the expectations that had been built on the amiable character, and promising talents of this youth, were blasted by his death. I have frequently reproached myself with consenting to the experimental quackery in his case; and have apprehended that the development of tubercles in the lungs, was the consequence of the irritation of the corrosive sublimate of the Panacea, in a constitution strongly disposed to scrofula.



This woman I found under a horrible salivation, brought on by an excessive use of mercury. She had been placed under this treatment by Dr. —, of the Northern Liberties; in consequence of blotches and pimples appearing on the skin, succeeding to delivery. She had taken, according to her account, an immoderate quantity of pills, which appeared to me to contain corrosive sublimate.

At the time I saw her, the saliva was running in an incessant stream from her mouth. The fauces and gums were ulcerated, and a large ulcer existed on one of the feet. Her disease was clearly mercurial, and brought on by her attending physician.

I assured Mr. Swaim, he would find no difficulty in curing that case, and the first step towards it was throwing her box of pills into the fire: good nourishing diet, even without his Panacea, would complete the rest. The infant of this woman was emaciated, from the ill condition of its mother's milk; but I do not recollect that it had any ulcerations on its surface.

Returning from our visit to this patient, I told Mr. Swaim, I was satisfied his Panacea was the same as the syrup of Cuisinier; the mode of preparing which I mentioned to him: he turned round, and asked me if I "told that to the doctors."

The next case that fell under my notice, in which the Panacea had been employed, was that of a lady of this city, who sent for me on account of a violent ophthalmia, with which she had been attacked. Whilst examining the eye, I was struck with the mercurial fœtor of her breath, and inquired into its cause. She told me her mouth had become very sore, and the teeth were so tender she could scarcely eat; and I found, on examining the gums, she was salivated. This she insisted was impossible, as she had taken nothing but Swaim's Panacea: I assured her nothing was more likely, as I was satisfied the active principle was corrosive sublimate. Mr. Swaim called the same day to see his patient; and, when reproached for the salivation that had been induced, he declared it was produced by his medicine stirring up the old mercury in her system. This lady had not, however, for more than eight years, taken a single grain of mercury in any shape. Mr. Swaim took away the bottle of Panacea, though not half consumed, and replaced it with another.

Soon after my election as one of the physicians of the Alm-

House, I gave to the apothecary of that establishment, Mr. Marks, the formula for preparing Cuisinier's syrup. It was immediately employed in some cases of cutaneous ulceration of long standing, and with great success. Since that period, it has been employed in that Institution; during which, not a bottle of Swaim's Panacea has been administered to the patients. In the Alms House, I have frequently had patients under my charge, who had been treated ineffectually by Mr. Swaim, with his Panacea; and I have had several in private practice, in which it had proved wholly inefficacious. Dr. J. RHEA BARTON has exhibited to me two patients, one of true scrofula; both of whom were promised, unhesitatingly, a cure from the Panacea, but whose diseases became infinitely worse under the treatment, and were finally abandoned. One of them has since been entirely cured under the care of Dr. BARTON.

SAMUEL JACKSON, M. D.







